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Chairman Towns to Examine Viral Hepatitis Prevention, Detection and Control

WASHINGTON – Chairman Edolphus “Ed” Towns (D-NY) today announced that the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform will hold a hearing entitled, “Viral Hepatitis: The Secret Epidemic” to examine issues associated with the prevention, detection, and control of viral hepatitis, with a particular focus on the recent report of the Institute of Medicine entitled, “Hepatitis and Liver Cancer: A National Strategy for Prevention and Control of Hepatitis B and C.”

Viral hepatitis, a viral infection of the liver, is the leading cause of liver cancer in the United States. The disease, though treatable, is a major public health problem in this country, where approximately 15,000 people die annually from liver cancer or liver disease resulting from hepatitis infection. In the United States, hepatitis claims more lives each year than HIV/AIDS.

The hearing will take place at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 17, 2010 in room 2154 Rayburn

House Office Building. Doors open to all credentialed members of the media at 9:00 a.m. and to the general public at 9:45 a.m. A webcast of the hearing will be available on the committee website at <http://oversight.house.gov> .

The witnesses invited to testify are:

Panel I

Hon. Rep. Hank C. Johnson

Member

U.S. House of Representatives

Hon. Rep. Bill Cassidy

Member

U.S. House of Representatives

Hon. Rep. Mike Honda

Member

U.S. House of Representatives

Panel II

Dr. Howard Koh

Assistant Secretary for Health

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Dr. John Ward

Director

Viral Hepatitis Program

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Panel III

Dr. Randy Mayer

Institute of Medicine

Chief, Bureau of HIV, STD, and Hepatitis

Iowa Department of Public Health

Mr. Michael Ninburg

Executive Director

Hepatitis Education Project

Dr. Jeffrey Levi

Executive Director

Trust for America's Health

Mr. Rolf Benirschke

Retired NFL player, Spokesman for hepatitis awareness

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